



REUTERS

World

Business

Markets

Breakingviews

Video

More



REBOOT-LIVE

MAY 23, 2014 / 11:36 AM / UPDATED 7 YEARS AGO

Apple, Google, Intel, Adobe to pay \$325 million to settle hiring lawsuit

By Jonathan Stempel



(Reuters) - Four major Silicon Valley companies have formally agreed to pay \$324.5 million to settle claims brought by employees who accused them of limiting competition by colluding not to poach each other's talent.

Slideshow (3 images)

The settlement, between Apple Inc, Google Inc, Intel Corp, Adobe Systems Inc and roughly 64,000 workers, was disclosed in papers filed late on Thursday with a federal court in San Jose, California.

U.S. District Judge Lucy Koh has been asked to preliminarily approve the accord at a June 19 hearing, over an objection by one of the four named plaintiffs, Michael Devine, who says the settlement let the companies off too easily.

The payout was originally reported by Reuters but not officially confirmed.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs may seek up to 25 percent of the settlement amount in legal fees.

Filed in 2011, the lawsuit accused Silicon Valley companies of conspiring to limit competition and keep workers from competing for jobs.

U.S. coronavirus cases surpass 16 million as vaccine begins roll-out

ADVERTISEMENT

The case has been closely watched because of the potential \$9 billion of damages sought, and its occasional embarrassing revelations into how Silicon Valley operates.

Among the communications that became public were pointed emails from Apple co-founder Steve Jobs that at times admonished then-Google Chief Executive Eric Schmidt to stop raiding his company.

Thursday's settlement gives workers only a few thousand dollars each on average.

The companies' combined profit in their latest fiscal years was about \$60 billion, with three-fifths coming from Apple.

In court papers, two law firms representing the plaintiffs said Devine's objection should not doom what they consider a fair and reasonable settlement for an antitrust case, and which serves the best interests of the class.

They pointed to a July 2012 jury verdict in the same court that found Toshiba Corp conspired to fix prices in the liquid crystal display market but awarded just \$87 million of damages, one-tenth of what was sought.

“The amount of the settlement does not relate to the size or profitability of the companies we sued,” Joseph Saveri, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, said in an interview. “It relates to the claims we made, the law that applies to them, and the facts that we could prove at trial. Based on that, I think the settlement is a significant achievement.”

Devine did not immediately respond on Friday to a request for comment.

Koh on May 16 approved separate settlements totaling \$20 million over alleged poaching by Walt Disney Co’s Lucasfilm and Pixar units, and by Intuit Inc.

The case in U.S. District Court, Northern District of California is In re: High-Tech Employee Antitrust Litigation, 11-02509.

Reporting by Jonathan Stempel in Toronto; Additional reporting by Dan Levine in San Francisco; Editing by Paul Simao

Our Standards: The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.

MORE FROM REUTERS

PAID PROMOTIONAL LINKS

Promoted by **Dianomi**



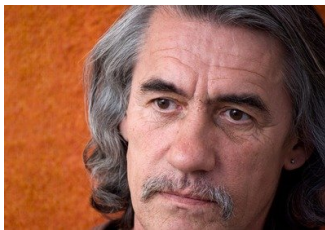
What Deglobalization Could Mean for Investors and Companies

From Merrill



Motley Fool Issues Rare "All In" Buy Alert

The Motley Fool



7 Mistakes You'll Make When Hiring a Financial Advisor

smartasset



Convenient one-weekend-per-month class schedule at NYU's DC location

NYU Stern Executive MBA



Avoid These Recent Cyber Scams and Protect Your Family

From BofA Private Bank

✕

Aramco

[Learn More](#)

The Aramco logo, featuring the word "aramco" in a dark grey, lowercase, sans-serif font, followed by a square icon. The icon is divided into four quadrants: top-left is blue, top-right is green, bottom-left is yellow, and bottom-right is red, with a white starburst in the center.

A circular graphic composed of many small, colored segments in shades of blue, green, and yellow. In the center of the circle, the number "004" is displayed in a stylized, digital font with a blue-to-white gradient.

Video Ad by **Dianomi**

MORE FROM REUTERS



U.S. Supreme Court ends Texas lawsuit seeking to undo Trump...

11 Dec



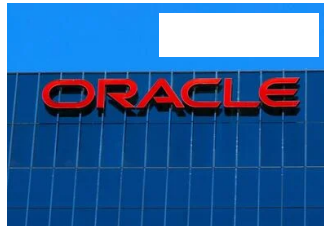
Pro-Trump groups to march and pray to protest president's...

12 Dec



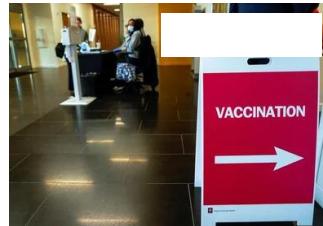
Vehicle plows into Manhattan Black Lives Matter protest, multiple...

11 Dec



Oracle moves headquarters to Texas from Silicon Valley

11 Dec



Explainer: U.S. has authorized the first COVID-19 vaccine - when...

12 Dec

U.S. coronavirus cases surpass 16 million as vaccine begins roll-out

U.S. coronavirus cases surpass 16 million as vaccine begins roll-out

MORE FROM REUTERS



Texas GOP chief suggests forming 'union of states' after...

12 Dec



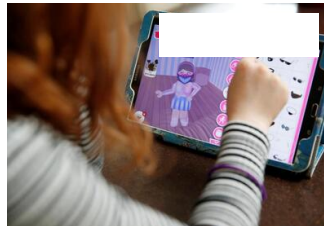
Trump lashes out at Supreme Court, Barr as efforts to overturn...

12 Dec



Iran executes dissident journalist Ruhollah Zam - Nour news

12 Dec



U.S. gaming platform Roblox to delay IPO until next year

12 Dec



Swiss freeze assets of Belarus leader Lukashenko

12 Dec

U.S. coronavirus cases surpass 16 million as vaccine begins roll-out

[Apps](#) [Newsletters](#) [Advertise with Us](#) [Advertising Guidelines](#) [Cookies](#) [Terms of Use](#) [Privacy](#)



All quotes delayed a minimum of 15 minutes. See [here](#) for a complete list of exchanges and delays.

© 2020 Reuters. All Rights Reserved.

U.S. coronavirus cases surpass 16 million as vaccine begins roll-out